

REMARKS

Entry of the foregoing amendments prior to examination on the merits is respectfully requested.

The Abstract has been replaced with a new Abstract of the Disclosure. In addition, the specification has been amended to incorporate the section headings to comply with U.S. patent practice. Claims 1-34 have been canceled and replaced with new claims 35-42.

Favorable consideration of the subject application is respectfully requested.

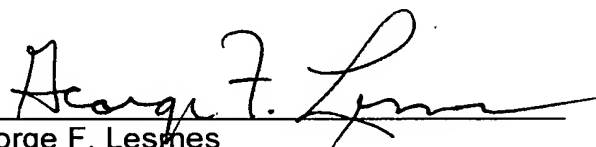
If there are any questions concerning this paper or the application in general, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (703) 838-6683.

Respectfully submitted,

BURNS, DOANE, SWECKER & MATHIS, L.L.P.

Date: March 18, 2004

By:

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "George F. Lesmes", is written over a horizontal line.

George F. Lesmes
Registration No. 19,995

P.O. Box 1404
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1404
(703) 836-6620